

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

Planning Your Way To Success

by *Charlene Rashkow*

Whether you are a small company or a large corporation one of the primary keys to success lies in preparing and following a good marketing plan. You can have the most awesome product or service to offer but without a plan in place, you may flounder for direction and waste a lot of time and energy as a result. Consider that your marketing plan, which is separate and apart from a business plan, is an essential element to the success of your company. The plan should contain data and specifics pertaining to your company's goals, the product or service you're offering, how you intend to market it and a means for measuring your success. Generally, larger companies create plans that are extremely comprehensive in size and nature while smaller companies will do just as well with a 5 to 10 page strategy. It's a good idea to refer to your plan regularly so that you can track your company's progress

What A Marketing Plan Should Include

1.) ***Creating an Objective:*** As a strong proponent for creating an objective or purpose regarding any endeavor, I recommend starting with a clear objective for your marketing plan. Although it may mean spending a bit of time in contemplation, it's best to be certain as to the overall purpose and objective of your company. Take some time to focus on what you really want to achieve. As an example, when I first began my consulting business while putting together a rough marketing plan, I thought long and hard as to what I intended. More than anything else, I wanted to share my skill in a positive and meaningful way. Focusing on what I felt about my expertise, I knew that I enthusiastically enjoyed the challenge of creating material that is powerful, well written and simple to read. I also relished in the idea of empowering other people so with those thoughts in mind, I created an intention that aligned with my purpose. It is as follows: "My intention as a Writer/Consultant is to fully succeed at providing my clients with high quality written material that uniquely reflects their objectives by helping them stand apart from the crowd!" That intention has taken me far on the road I contemplated many years ago.

2.) ***Targeting Your Audience Included*** in your marketing plan should be the strategies you intend to apply for specifically reaching your targeted market. Pay special attention as to which audience you are trying to reach. Are there particular trends in your industry? Are you aware of your competition? Are layoffs effecting your particular arena and if so is it to your benefit or detriment? Have you researched the need for your product? In other words, consider how the economy may effect people either negatively or positively when they consider purchasing your product or service? The economy does not necessarily influence some industries, but because it does effect many markets, you may want to narrow your focus.

3.) ***Your Strategy Include*** in your plan effective marketing strategies. Think about some of the largest companies in the world that are constantly brainstorming in an effort to keep the public's attention. Notice how we are collectively bombarded with new commercials and announcements daily, in an

attempt to make sure we never forget certain products or services. I don't necessarily recommend that you do the same, but it does hold some weight. If you're aren't promoting yourself in some way, it's easy to forget your company. Of course while most of us cannot compete with huge companies, there are many ways to promote your business without it costing a lot of money. It simply requires a bit of thought and creativity.

Since marketing is a process that never ends, have a few ideas already in place as to how you may reach your target audience. While you may hope for the day when you can sit back reaping the benefits of your efforts, you can never stop marketing. It's a constant challenge determining various methods and tactics that will get you noticed but it can be fun.

For the majority of small entrepreneurial efforts, marketing can be a trial and error effort since some methods work for a while and then seem to dry up. Based upon my experience, when I find that one avenue isn't bearing fruit, I simply recognize it as an opportunity to explore other avenues. For me, that primarily means getting back to basics, so I write a new article, send out a press release, begin an e-mail campaign or simply get quiet for a few days until I'm inspired. But I always have something in my plan that keeps me motivated. I suggest not putting all your eggs into one basket because if the well runs dry, you're left with nothing. I also suggest staying open to new ideas. Very often we become set in our ways and feel afraid to veer in a new direction. You may not have considered a particular avenue until someone suggests it, so don't say no until you've given it some thought.

4.) ***Setting Time and Accomplishment Goals.*** Generally your plan should cover a period of from six months to a year. Check the plan you've prepared on a monthly basis as a measure for meeting your goals and objectives. Ask yourself periodically if you've taken all the steps that you planned? Are you within your schedule? Are you attracting the clientele you had hoped? Are you making good contacts that return or send referrals? Are you building rapport with customers? Does the plan need some rearranging or rethinking? If you find that you're on target keep the plan as it is. But if you obviously see that something isn't working, rethink your marketing strategies. Primarily you want the world to beat a path to your door so keeping a good marketing plan updated and refined is crucial to the success of your business. Having a roadmap to success will both keep you on track and help to maximize your outcomes.

About the Author:

Charlene Rashkow Author of "Movin' On Up" E-book and Writing Stylist/Consultant has successfully written outstanding business material for companies and individuals for more than 15 years. Creating clever promotional materials, Charlene is well known for her press releases, business plans, resumes, brochure copy, web site content and entrepreneurial e-book. You may visit Charlene Rashkow at www.allyourwritingneeds.com or write her at Crwriting@aol.com. You may also call her directly at (310) 514-4844.